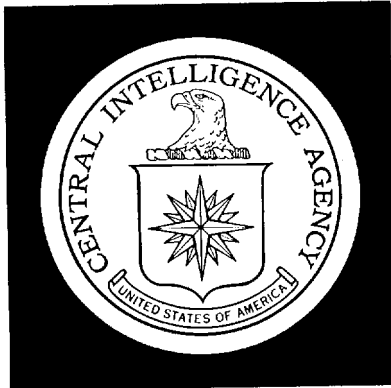


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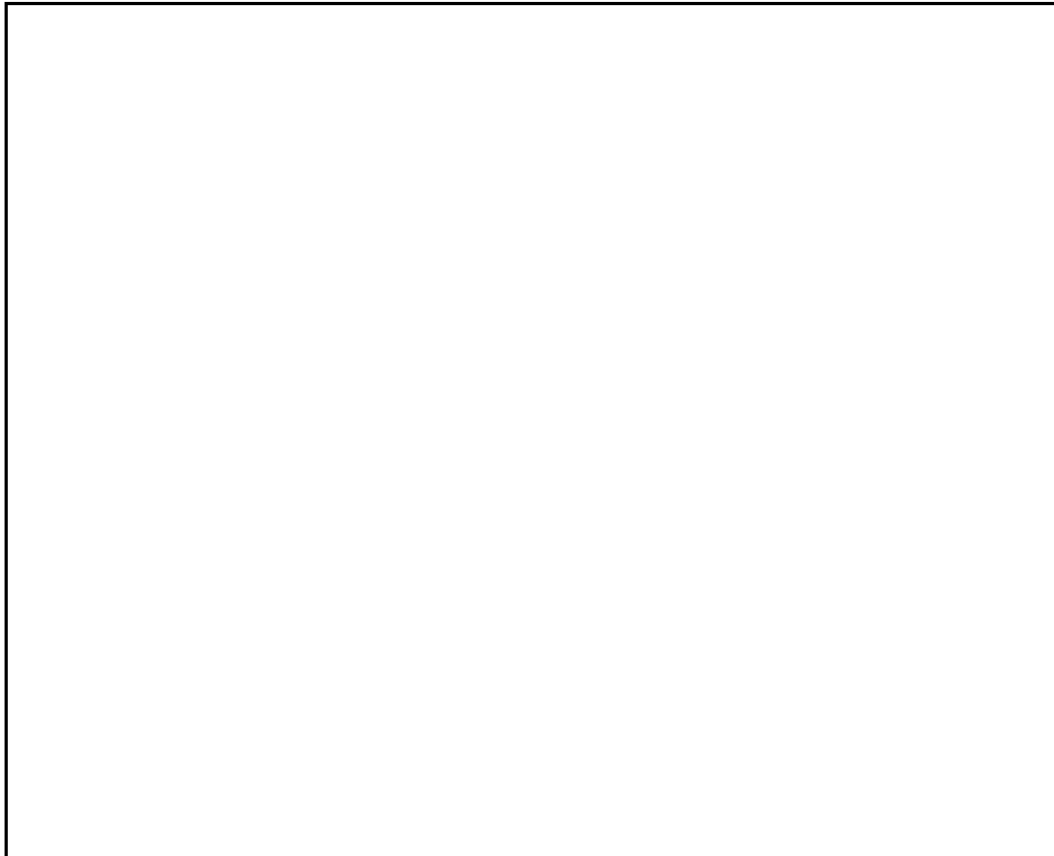
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CAMBODIA: National Assembly acceptance of the new cabinet appears likely. (Page 1)

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CAMBODIA: Sirik Matak's proposed cabinet should appeal to all political factions, thereby facilitating its acceptance by the National Assembly.

The most important positions in the new Lon Nol administration are to be allocated to members of the outgoing government or the Phnom Penh establishment. Prime Minister Delegate Matak plans to act as his own defense minister, Foreign Affairs Minister Koun Wick is to retain that position, and National Assembly President In Tam is slated to become first vice premier and minister of interior. Matak's nominee for second deputy prime minister in charge of economic affairs is Sok Chhong, now director of the National Commercial Bank. Hang Thun Hak, the popular minister of community development, evidently is to retain that portfolio, while also serving as third deputy prime minister. At the ministerial working level, however, Matak is filling the remaining ten cabinet slots with junior bureaucrats, most of whom seem to be relatively well qualified for their jobs.

Just last week Matak indicated that he was opposed to making extensive changes in cabinet personnel. His decision to reverse that stand appears to be politically prudent, however, and his elimination of a number of old-guard officials should be greeted with satisfaction by his reform-minded critics. Although Son Ngoc Thanh was left out of the new government, he has claimed that Sok Chhong and Hang Thun Hak are members of "his group."

Confident and in high spirits, Matak told a US Embassy official on 5 May that he had had no difficulty in assembling the cabinet. He also said that he does not anticipate any problem in obtaining National Assembly approval for the new government, and that he plans to submit his proposed list of ministers to the legislature in a day or two.

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